

CROSS-LEGGED KNEE EXTENSIONS

This simple exercise will help participants rise from chairs, climb stairs, and otherwise get on with their lives.

Benefits »

- ⦿ Strengthens quadriceps and knee musculature.
- ⦿ Helps reduce common types of knee pain.
- ⦿ Allows participants to do a seated strength exercise to strengthen their legs.

Set It Up »

You will not need any special equipment for this exercise, unless you choose to add light ankle weights for some participants.

How to Do It »

The Start

- ⦿ Participants sit all the way back in a chair.
- ⦿ Their back should rest against the back of the chair and arms on the chair arms, if available. (If the chair has no arms, place arms on the sides of the chair to help support the back and brace the torso.) Abs are braced and shoulder blades are back and down. Ankles are crossed.



The Moves

Use the following cues.

- ⦿ Lift legs upward until the knee of the lower leg is nearly straight.
- ⦿ Raise the lower leg up to increase work.
- ⦿ Hold a moment.
- ⦿ Lower the legs.
- ⦿ Repeat 8 to 15 times, as tolerated.
- ⦿ Place the other ankle in top position and do same exercise with other leg 8 to 15 times, as tolerated.

Take It Further »

- For greater difficulty, lengthen the time spent lifting and lowering the legs.
- Cue participants to press down on the lower leg with their upper leg.
- Use light ankle weights.

Give It More Balance »

As the legs come up, cue participants to pull their back away from the back of the chair, sit tall, and lengthen the spine. This will strengthen core muscles and require them to balance over their hips.

Keep It Safe »

Make sure participants sit all the way back in their chair with their hands on the chair arms or sides. This position keeps their back from feeling the weight of both legs lifting. If this exercise is too difficult for some, advise them to simply lift and extend one leg at a time.